

REMARKS

The Claims have been amended to avoid multiple claim dependency.

Respectfully submitted,



Norman N. Kuritz
(Registration No. 20,586)

VENABLE

Post Office Box 34385

Washington, DC 20043-9998

Telephone: (202) 962-4800

Telefax: (202) 962-8300

NNK/elw
DC2DOCS1/354996

(PCT/CH00/00451)

APPENDIX**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES****IN THE CLAIMS:**

The claims have been amended as follows:

3. (Amended) The handling device as claimed in ~~one or both of the preceding~~ claim 1, characterized in that grippers (44, 60) of the gripping device (43) are arranged on a common carrier (61) which can be moved parallel to the storage device (42) on a guide element (62).

4. (Amended) The handling device as claimed in ~~one or more of the preceding~~ claim 1, characterized in that grippers (44, 60) can be pivoted into two end positions, being located in a first end position in an empty position and in a second end position in a transport position for wafers of the gripping device (43), in which they transport wafers substantially parallel to the storage device (42).

6. (Amended) The handling device as claimed in ~~one or more of the preceding~~ claim 1, characterized in that grippers (44, 60) of the gripping device (43) can be moved rectilinearly, substantially parallel to the surfaces of the wafers and transversely with respect to the direction of movement of the gripping device (43) independently of other grippers (44, 60) of the gripping device, being located in a first end position in an empty position and in a second end position in a transport position for wafers of the gripping device (43), in which they transport wafers substantially parallel to the storage device (42).

7. (Amended) The handling device as claimed in ~~one or more of the preceding~~ claim 1, characterized in that it is possible to insert into the storage device (42) a number of wafers which at least substantially corresponds to an integer multiple of the number of wafers which can be handled simultaneously by the gripping device (43).

8. (Amended) The handling device as claimed in ~~one or more of the preceding~~ claim 1, characterized by a transfer station (40) arranged in the travel path of the gripping device (43) and having a temporary store for wafers, in which a plurality of wafers can be arranged with their surfaces parallel to one another, it being possible to use the gripping device (43) to transfer wafers from the storage device (42) to the transfer station (40) and vice versa.

14. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 12 ~~or 13~~, characterized in that the gripping device (43) grips wafers (48) of a wafer batch arranged in a transfer station, sets down the wafers (48) at storage locations belonging to the storage device (42) and stores the positions of each of the wafers (48) in the storage devices (42), together with data for the identification of the batch in which the wafer was previously located and/or data with respect to processing processes already passed through by the respective wafer.

15. (Amended) The method as claimed in ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 12 to 14, characterized in that the gripping device (43) moves substantially parallel to a stack direction of the wafers between the removal of a first and the removal of a last wafer (48).